



First 5 Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Project

May 2004

Goal: To augment the child-care services, parent education, and family literacy components of the California Migrant Education Even Start (MEES) program by (1) creating additional school-center based programs, (2) increasing the home based service element, and (3) implementing a demonstration “outreach” program provided by La Union Del Pueblo Entero (LUPE).

This Fact Sheet provides background information and a report on the current status of the First 5 California Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Project. This \$10 million initiative approved by the State Commission in June 2003 is being conducted in two program phases, with a dedicated evaluation component:

1. THE MEES PROGRAM PHASE

Provides \$7.4 million over 4 years (or \$1.85 million per year) to the 22 California MEES Regions statewide to provide the following:

- Augmentation of MEES Programs with child care services during non-traditional hours, especially during farm labor seasons, by increasing the hours of services to migrant children in order to reflect the farm labor working hours of their parents. MEES will also support the increase of child-care slots for migrant children.
- Increase program capacity in order to serve more children and families by expanding hours of service to MEES participants by 25% and create a minimum of 60 new project sites statewide.
- Provide additional Early Childhood Education Programs to children ages 0-5 by making a concerted effort to provide MEES funded services through center-based models
- Provide, through a coordinated outreach and educational effort with LUPE, additional education services to migrant parents in order to supply migrant parents with information and encouragement that will lead to their participation not only in MEES services, but also in all First 5 funded county services such as Universal Health, Preschool for All, School Readiness Initiative and other local, state and federal programs and services for which they are eligible.
- Provide increased transportation services in isolated rural areas by sub-contracting and coordinating services with local transportation providers such as: school districts, county education offices, public transportation entities and other local programs.

Background information:

MEES is a family literacy and parenting program for parents and their preschool children. The First 5 California project will focus on children birth to five years of age and their parent/caregivers. Project activities will support the children's early childhood



development; school readiness; and assistance to parents in improving their English abilities, native language literacy and knowledge of parenting strategies. This project is designed to improve the availability of services to California's migrant population and to test the effectiveness of an outreach campaign designed to improve parental awareness of service availability. Implementation tasks were greeted with great enthusiasm by the 22 MEES regions and affected parents. Program amendments were submitted by all of the MEES regions statewide. Program milestones of reaching an additional 5,000 clients plus per year with over 60 new sites statewide will be achieved and significantly exceeded prior to the completion of this project.

2. THE LA UNION DEL PUEBLO ENTERO (LUPE) PHASE

Provides \$2.2 Million over 4 years (or \$550,000 per year) to implement a demonstration project targeted in an 8 county region utilizing grass root outreach and community education services and tailoring the outreach message to address the special needs of the farm worker population. The LUPE Component is comprised of the following activities:

- Provide direct outreach within migrant farm worker communities to encourage participation of migrant farm worker children in services such as MEES services, as expanded through this project; First 5 funded county services, such as Universal Health, Preschool for All, School Readiness Initiative; and other locally developed programs; and existing state and federal health and social programs for which they are eligible.
- Provide parent education services to the migrant farm worker communities, with the desired outcome of increasing the farm worker parent knowledge on the importance of healthy childhood development and early childhood learning.

Background information:

LUPE is a non-profit 501c3 organization established in 1979 by Cesar Chavez, that focuses on grass root outreach and community education services. LUPE will utilize extensive community based networks to perform community outreach to enhance participation in the newly expanded MEES programs and provide informal parent education services within the migrant farm worker communities

Project Status as of May 2004:

The project was implemented in a timely manner. Initial First 5 California funding was disbursed to the 22 MEES Regions and LUPE on December 31, 2003 following review and approval of funding proposals and program plans. **A review of program implementation to date shows 67 new program sites statewide serving 3,100 new clients (children and parents). These totals represent 65% of the entire project goal being reached within the first three months.**

Initial meetings have been held between First 5 California and MEES Evaluation staff to begin development of the \$400,000 Evaluation Component.



For additional information on the next steps of the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Project, please contact Richard Iniguez at First 5 California, (916) 324-1418 or riniguez@ccfc.ca.gov.